GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1699
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2007
IMPROVEMENTS IN THE WORKING OF PASSPORT OFFICES
Agarwal Shri Dhirendra;Prasad Shri Hari Kewal

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Institute of Smart Government, Hyderabad has submitted (completed) its report (study) for bringing improvements in the working of passport offices in the country;

(b) if so, the reforms suggested by the Institute;

(c) whether the Government has accepted the reforms suggested by the Institute;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the timeframe that had been fixed for implementation of the reforms suggested by the Institute?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) Yes.

(b), (c) & (d) The Government had entrusted the National Institute of Smart Government (NISG), Hyderabad, with the task of undertaking a time-bound study on the passport issuance system, including its IT aspects with the objective to deliver passport related services to the citizens in a timely, transparent, more accessible, reliable manner. NISG has submitted its report, which has been accepted by the Government, and it has been decided to launch "Passport Seva Project".

The project is expected to result in the issue of passports within 3 days and in cases, which require police verification, within 3 days after the completion of the verification process. Tatkal passports are expected to be issued the same day. The proposal is to have 68 Passport Facilitation Centres all over the country where the non-sovereign functions, involved in the passport issuance process, such as initial scrutiny of the application forms, acceptance of fee, scanning of the documents, taking photos, etc. will be done by the service provider to be selected through an open bidding process. The Government staff at the Passport Facilitation Centres will verify the documents and decide on granting of passport. The other activities such as printing and dispatch will also be done by the Government staff. Police verification will be expedited through electronic linkage of the Passport Facilitation Centres with the police authorities in State Capitals.

(e) The Government have fixed a time-frame of 19 months for implementation of the 'Passport Seva Project'.